Short Speech

Prepared, to be Spoken

By a Worthy MEMBER

IN

Parliament

Concerning the

PRESENT STATE

OF THE

NATION.

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A SPEECH prepared (it seems) for the ensuing Session, by a Member of Parliament, which falling from him by Accident, is Publish'd, lest he should have no other Copy.

THE Business of this Day is the greatest, and of the greatest Consequence that ever came before the Representatives of this Nation: For as in all past Ages, the People of this Country have liv'd in Liberty at Home, and Reputation Abroad; so upon the Resolutions of this Day, or at least of this Session of Parliament, to which those of this Day may give a considerable stroke, does depend the continuation of that Liberty and Reputation which we have always had, of being bold Asserters of our Rights and Freedom, together with the Fate and Destiny of our Posterity.

Our Great Historian, has made the Noble Spirit of our Ancestors Illustrious to this and all future Ages: All Nations read, and all Posterity will know and praise their Actions: But if we shall now so far degenerate, as not to assert our Freedom at Home, by breaking a standing Army in time of Peace, which if kept up is a Treasonable Alteration of our Government, & makes it Tyrannical: If we do not assert our Rights as a Free People, by such just and true Representations of them to our Neighbour-Nation,

tion, as may convince them, we have no Designs, but such as we have just Right to prosecute, and are for the Common Good of both: If we do not discover the black Designs of a few ill Men, who endeavour for sinister Ends to set the Nation together by the Ears: I say, if we do not take effectual ways to accomplish these things, and establish a lasting Peace, both at Home and Abroad, I shall easily comprehend the History of our Nation in this and all future Ages in two Words: If you ask them, I answer, *Slavery* and *Oblivion*.

But that I may give some Advice in the Affair, and propose Remedies suteable to our Condition, and the multiplicity of Evils that press and threaten us on all hands; 'twill be necessary to deduce them from their original Causes, and to give a just and true Account of *the present State of the Nation*.

When that Great and Memorable Change happen'd in this Island, by which the Kingdom of *Scotland* and *England* came to be so far united as to have but one King, both Nations promis'd to themselves great Advantages: And tho' the Endeavours that were then, and have been since us'd for a nearer Union, prov'd unsuccessful; yet this Advantage still remain'd, that Peace betwixt the two Nations was preserv'd, and a King common to both, as a common Father, kept them from encroaching upon the Rights of each other; and having no regard to the Partialities, or Animosities of either, did equal Justice to both.

This ſtate of things has laſted to our time. But now we are told, that his Majeſty is forc'd to do diverſe things prejudicial to the Intereſt of *Scotland*, on account of Repreſentations and Addreſſes made to him by an *Engliſh* Parliament, with whom (as repreſenting a more powerful Nation) he is oblig'd to comply: as if there were no Rule of Juſtice by which he ſhould judge of Matters contraverted between us: As if in a Suit between a Rich and a Poor Man, the Judge were not to conſider the Merits of the Cauſe, but always give Judgement in favour of the Rich Man.

And tho' in former Reigns ever ſince the firſt Union, under one Head, no ſuch thing was ever done, or ſo much as mention'd; tho' no King ever ſuffered the leaſt Breach to be made upon the Independency of *Scotland*, as appears more evidently in K. *Charles* 2d's Removing the *Engliſh* Gariſons out of this Country in the Year 1660; yet by our remotneſs from the Seat of the Government, and Influence of the Prince, (as a Farm that has none but Servants to look after it) this Nation became quickly of little or no value; and *England* by means of Husbandry and Trade, as well as by being the Seat of the Empire, riſing as faſt as *Scotland* ſunk by the want of all theſe, the Diſproportion in Riches fell from 1 to 5, as it was about the Year 1600, to that of 1 to 30, as it is at this day.

But the People of this Nation, tho' they know the removal of their Kings to be the Original

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Cause of this Alteration; yet knowing also that by the same means they had obtain'd a perpetual Peace with *England*; and being conscious to themselves, that whilst their Freedom and Priviledges were preserved entire by the Prince, it was their own fault if the Policy of the Country were not regarded, if Husbandry and Trade were not advanced: On these Considerations (I say) they have always continued peaceable in that Union, without the least thoughts of ever separating or dividing from their Neighbours, or disturbing the Peace of this Island any more.

And tho' in the state of Separation they were much more Considerable, Rich, and Powerful, than ever they have been since; Tho' *France*, (our Natural Ally in case of a Separation with *England*) has of late Years become not only a Ballance for *England*, but a Ballance for almost all the rest of *Europe*, in conjunction with *England*: Tho' our Colony in *Ireland* were become formidable to the *English* power there (who besides are always sure to have the *Irish* for an Enemy.) Yet all these Dis-advantages on the one hand, and Hopes on the other, could never shake that Allegiance which we owed to our Prince, nor remove us from that Union with our Neighbours, by which we had suffered so much.

But having within these five or six Years begun to be sensible, that the extreme Poverty of our People, which still encreased, did proceed from nothing but the want of Foreign Trade, which gives Life to all Manufactures, and en-

creases the value of Land, by giving Encouragement to Improve it; We applied our selves to the setting up several Manufactories, and sending our Ships to Trade in Places where formerly they were not imployed: Yet knowing that all this would prove but a mean and peddling kind of Commerce, unless we traded to the *Indies*, it was very natural to us, who abounded more in People than any thing else, to think (after the Example of all our Neighbours) of having a Colony there also: And accordingly an *Indian*-Company was established by Act of Parliament.

When on a sudden, as if by that Act we had broke the Peace with our Neighbours, we begin to be complain'd of, and cried out against in *England*; It was said, That the Priviledges and Powers of the Company were Immense (tho' it is evident that those of the *French* and *Dutch* Companies are greater) It was said, That the Immunity from Customs for 21 Years, would sink all the other Companies of *Europe*; not at all considering that there was a Draw-back in *England* for all *Indian* Goods that were not consumed within the Country: And by the Arts of a few ill Men, the Parliament of *England* was surpriz'd and led into Apprehensions, which they have found since to be so groundless, that for two or three Years last past, there was not the least mention made of them. His Majesty likewise was, by evil Councellors, perswaded to tell the Parliament of *England*, *That he had been ill-served in* Scotland, &c.

I shall not tediously particularize all the bad Counsel that was given, nor all the foul Dealing, either in the Affair of *Hamburgh*, which was against the Law of Nations; in that of the *Spanish* Memorial, which was against common Faith in Society; in that of the Proclamations published in the *West-Indies*, by which his Majesty's Subjects, for prosecuting their just Rights warranted by Act of Parliament, were treated as Enemies; in refusing them Wood and Water, as if they had been proscrib'd & condemn'd to die, *aqua & igne interdicti*. (I say) I shall not tediously insist on the odious and shameful Circumstances of all those Particulars, because they are sufficiently known to all of you; but especially because it has been since evident what sort of Men they are who gave the King such advice; Men altogether depending for Places or Pensions on the Court, or such as did Journey-Work for them.

The House of Commons in their last Session having fully shewn, how much such Courses were against the Sentiments of the *English* Nation, and resented the bad Usage we received, in a very generous manner; declaring withal, That any Propositions of an Union between the two Nations that shall come from us, shall be always welcome to them. I shall only make some Reflections on the sad Condition of this Nation, with relation to this great Design, by which they hope to relieve themselves from their great Poverty; and in which they are now

so deeply engag'd, that with it they must stand and fall (for tho' undertaken by a private Company, it is become of universal Concernment) whoever Wounds or with-holds Nourishment from it, destroys the Vitals of the Nation.

We have for Enemies *Spain*, powerful in the *West-Indies*; The *French*, powerful at Sea, who have often beg'd of the *Spaniard* the liberty to destroy us: We have been abandoned at Home in Word and Deed. 'Tis declared we have no Right to the Place where we have settled our Colony, because our Settlement in that Place contradicts a certain Agreement for the Division of the *Spanish* Monarchy, and breaks the Measures of a Catholick League for the Extirpation of the *Protestant* Religion, and the Remainders of Liberty through the World. We are exposed to be treated as Pirates; and tho' neither the *English* nor *Dutch* Nation be our Enemies, yet the *English* and *Dutch* Councellors (who to the Dishonour and Ruin of this Nation, meddle too much in our Affairs) are our Mortal foes. What shall I say of *Scots* Men who concur in such Advice? If ever there were reason to Complain of evil Councellors, sure it must be of those of this Nation at this time: Yet these Men have the Confidence to look us boldly in the Face, tho' their Impudent Contrivances to Ruine the Colony of *Caledonia*, & Murder such numbers of them in the *West-Indies*, be notourly known. What shall I say of a Man who, without any other Charge to

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protect him, doth such as to the utmost aggravates his Crime, is at the Head of all the Mischief that has, or is like to fall upon this Nation. Who is it, that having the right to destroy a Noxious Beast, has not at the same time the right to destroy such an one? These are the Enemies of your Company and Colony, which you have been at great Charges and unspeakable Pains to erect, establish, and maintain; that you might bring this Nation from Poverty and Reproach, to Honour and Wealth; our poor People from under the perpetual Temptations of Stealing, Lying, Cheating, nay and often all the necessity of Starving, for want of Bread, to that Ease, Plenty, and Satisfaction, which always accompany Industry.

These are the Men, who this Day oppose the giving a reasonable Tax to support so good and Glorious a Design, and would divert the Money which the Nation is willing to give, to another use. Sure one would think, that the Pretext must be very specious, that the use to which they would put it, must be some Design for the Good of the Nation, beyond what can occur to any Man upon first Thoughts. What can it be? Is it that for this Money once given, our Liberties shall by excellent Laws be established upon such solid Foundations as can never be shaken? Can Fertility of Soil, or the Happiness of Climate be purchased and brought to us from any of the Southern Countries? One would think it should be something of that nature.

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ture. No! 'tis to none of all these Uses that their Money is to be imploied. In what then? for at length we must know, should the surprize of Joy be never so great or dangerous. 'Tis, to maintain a perpetual Standing Army. What Reverse of Fortune? From what Expectations are we fallen? If, as upon many great Occurrences in human Affairs, so upon this occasion, a Medal were to be struck, a Ship arriving in Harbour, where Peace with an Olive-branch in hand, stands on the Shoar, might very well become one side; but a Fiend with a Torch in one hand and a Dagger in the other, must be the Reverse. Nothing but a Picture of the highest Felicity, and another of the most abject Misery can express the Alternative. Liberty, Riches, Peace, Good-order, Virtue, Ease and Quiet, are on the one hand; Slavery, Poverty, Oppression, Vice, together with the Calamity, Groans and Blood of the Poor, are on the other. To which of these will the Nation incline? Are they to be driven like Sheep to the Slaughter? Is there any Pretext for this Standing Army, that can be named by Men of the least Ingenuity? Has the bad Usage I mentioned before, or the many Indignities put upon this Nation of late, afforded any? No! nothing has been able to provoke us: We have always, and in every thing, complied with his Majesty beyond our Power; yet we are condemn'd to lose our Liberties: We are condemn'd to die, without any Guilt alledged against us: We are to have

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no Trade, becauſe inconſiſtent with a Standing Army: Our only Commerce is to be in Soldiers; by whom, that we may be Gainers, we are to have a Superplus over and above what we can pay. In which ſort of Commerce, if any Nation was ever a Gainer, I appeal to Hiſtory.

This Nation has of late been in a Starving Condition: And I wiſh that the Blood of many Thouſands may not be required of divers, whoſe duty it was in their ſeveral Stations to have provided for them: Yet during all that time, we were to Maintain an Army of idle Fellows, without the leaſt neceſſity, and in order to keep up 4 or 5000 of them, ſtarve 30 or 40000 innocent People; ſince if the Pay of that Army had been prudently imploied in buying of Corn, it would have been ſufficient to ſave the Lives of the one and the other.

You may, perhaps, ſay, That this is Reflecting upon the Parliament who ordered the keeping up of the Forces. I anſwer, The beſt of Councils, even Parliaments themſelves, are liable to Miſtakes, occaſioned by falſe Repreſentations of Affairs by evil Counſellors; but ſhould have a care of falling twice into the ſame Fault: And ſubſequent Seſſions of Parliament, ſhould correct the Errors of the former.

But when all Pretexts of Fears from a Foreign Invaſion have fail'd; when no Indignities in point of Honour; no extraordinary Loſſes of vaſt Numbers of our People, and Treaſure of the Nation; no Endeavours to create Animoſities

ties between the two Nations, have been able to provoke us to give the least pretence for the Standing Army? The evil Councellors have had recourse to Force and Bribery: They have drawn the greater part of the Standing Army near and about the Town in time of Parliament; by which those Gentlemen who, last Session, voted for a Standing Army, may already see what use is to be made of them; and will have their Names branded with Infamy to all Posterity, if they now vote for keeping them up any longer. They have remitted 200000 *l. Sterl.* into *Scotland*; (which they say Mr. *Carstares* has done by way of *Holland* for the more close conveyance, and that by my Lord *Portland*'s means) They have procured many new Warrants for Pensions, of which probably the first Term only will be paid, and perhaps not that same; for when the Villainy is done, the Villains become useless. They have Bribed diverse others with new Titles of Honour, for the most Infamous of all Actions; the 12 Years duration of the Parliament having given occasion to the evil Councellors to know the Pulse of every Man. And that no Artifice may escape them, they not only endeavour'd to corrupt the whole Representatives of Burrows at one dash, by a Tack of the Customs, (tho' God knows a very few reap the benefit) but have also at this Juncture erected little, pitiful, inconsiderable Villages into Royal Burrows, in order to have the same represented in Parliament by Persons secured to their Interest before-hand: And whenever the Representative of any Shire or

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Borrow dies, 'tis too well known what care is taken to have his Place immediatly supplied, *vim & modis*, by some Court-Myrmidon, a Guard or Dragoon-Officer, or some such. By all which means, we may in time expect to see the Officers of the Army (if kept on foot) muster'd in the Senate House; and then the Country freed from the Charge & Trouble of sending any other Representatives to serve in Parliament. I shall not insist on the spliting of State-Commissions among Members of Parliament, and granting sham Commissions *pro tempore* for the same Offices.

After so many Misteries of Iniquity, you will be very justly surpriz'd, if I shall mention one Blacker than all the rest; yet it is a thing of which I am credibly informed, and from many concurring Circumstances, have just ground to believe.

The *French* Court who, you know, have often beg'd leave of the *Spaniard* to destroy our Colony, & who hate you upon many accounts, but chiefly that of your Religion, have in conjunction with some of our evil Councellors, contrived a more subtile piece of Malice against you, than all these formerly mention'd; to accomplish which, they make use of their old Tool, the late King *James*, who to serve such ends and for his own Ruin, is still kept in *France*; they have furnish'd him with 40000 Pistols to send to his Party here, that they may be zealous in supporting our Colony in *Darien*: His Party here, God knows, is just as significant as he is there, and neither fit for any thing

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but to be made use of for their own and this Nations Ruin. The *French*, who are said to advance the Money (but no doubt know how to be reimbursed) can easily tell our evil Councellors by what way it is conveyed; and they can as easily Convict those who receive it.

This, unless Men be undeceived, must Ruin all, and stop the Mouths even of the best, who not being able to comprehend such refined Villainies, will conclude, That tho many honest Men are engaged in the Company, yet originally and at bottom it must needs be a *Jacobite* Design; and so the Court by this Artifice obtain that, which hitherto they have (in vain I hope) endeavoured; I mean the utter Destruction of our Colony.

'Tis become dangerous to contrive Plots in *England*, because they begin to find them out: Such Designs must now be transmitted to *Scotland*, as a Country remote from publick Intelligence.

'Twill perhaps be said, That to imploy so much Money among us, it would be to little purpose, since the evil Councellors are sure of their ends by other means; and that it is ridiculous to think, that only 20000 *l. Sterl.* should be imploied in direct Bribery, and 40000 Pistols on a Shamm-Plot. But they who say this, do not consider, that by this Means not only the Designs of the Court will go here without control; since every Man that opposes them, will be said to have received part of K. *James*'s

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Money; but also the People of *England* will be deluded into a Belief, that the *Jacobite* Party in *Scotland* is so formidable, that a Standing Army is necessary to keep them in awe; which Army would otherways be very much suspected by the *English*, as it will in the end be infallibly made use of to suppress the Liberty of both Nations; tho perhaps before that time, considering what sort of Men are now coming to the Helm in *England*, it may be imployed to reward the *Presbyterians* for their Services to the Court.

To conclude, tho we are remote from publick Intelligence, and the *Presbyterian* Party seems struck with incurable Blindness; yet I hope the Parliament will not wilfully shut their Eyes, but seriously consider the fatal Consequences of a Standing Army; and how absolutely necessary it is to Disband at least the far greater part of our Forces, even tho we had no other pressing Occasions for our Money at this Juncture.

Tell me, if ever there was such a swarm of *Popish* Priests among you as at this time: Consider the severe Act lately made in *England* against *Popery*, contrary to the mild Temper of that Nation; and then you will easily believe they were not induced to that Severity without some great and extraordinary Motive, tho perhaps not fit to be mentioned: Consider that in the Treaty of *Reswick*, as well as in that of *Hungary*, the *Protestant* Religion was abandoned by those who call themselves *Protestants*: Consider

sider the Persecutions of *France*, *Piedmont*, the *Palatinate*, *Hungary*, *Transilvania*; and the Forces that are now hovering about *Saxony*, in order to force that People to submit to *Popery*; Consider that the Apostate King of *Poland* is made a Tool to imbroil all the *Protestant* Powers of *Europe* (except only the *Protestant Swisse* Cantons, against whom the Emperor is now forming New Pretensions:) Consider that most of the *Popish* Princes of *Germany*, and some *Protestants* likewise, are arming powerfully, to assist him; for *Popery* is thought to be so necessary to keep People in due Obedience, that few Princes think themselves safe as long as their Subjects are of any other Religion: And there is but too just ground to suspect the Religion of diverse great Princes in *Europe*, who are called *Protestants*. Consider all these things, and act as you will Answer to God in the Great Day, for the Trust reposed in you. And so I conclude with that Admonition and Advice given by the Wisest of Men: *If thou Faint in the day of Adversity, thy Strength is small. If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto Death, and those that are ready to be slain. If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the Heart consider it? and he that keepeth the Soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every Man according to his works.* Prov. 24. 10, 11, 12.

Take away the Wicked from before the King, and his Throne shall be established in Righteousness. Prov. 25. 5.

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